

RANKING NORTHWEST SNOWPACKS

Seasons of unusually low snow packs

Prepared by Mark Moore, NWAC

Note: While some Northwest winters on record are noted for overall low snowdepths throughout the season, others gain notoriety by being unusually dry or warm during either the early or late part of the season. The following summary was prepared from a brief review of NWAC (Northwest Weather and Avalanche Center— www.nwac.us) snowpack statistics, and the snowdepth graphics available on www.skimountaineer.com. The table below indicates the years of interest for overall lowest snow packs (from the 1920's or 30's onward) and/or the time of winter these snowdepths were unusually low (for those years that experienced low totals for only part of the season).

Winter season	Reason for Ranking	Ranking	Comments
2004/05	Overall	1	Still unfolding, blocking ridge or split flow; potential recovery in late March and April?
1976/77	Overall	2	Huge ridge, little or no precipitation; some recovery in March/April
1980/81	Overall	3	Flatter ridge, periods of warm rain; some recovery in March/April
1989/90	Overall	4	Especially dry in southern Washington and Oregon
2001/02 1999/2000 1975/76 1939/40	Bad early season	Tied for 5	Some of the lowest snow totals early in the season; better snowpack recovery in Jan-Mar
1995/96 1991/92 1971/72 1940/41 1933/34	Bad late season	Tied for 5	Better early season snowfall; bad or terrible ending to winter

Further Note: This compilation is neither exhaustive nor necessarily definitive. The author(s) request forgiveness from other winters that may be close or should be included as honorable mentions (such honorable seasons might include: 1962/63, 1941/42, 1933/34 and 1929/30).